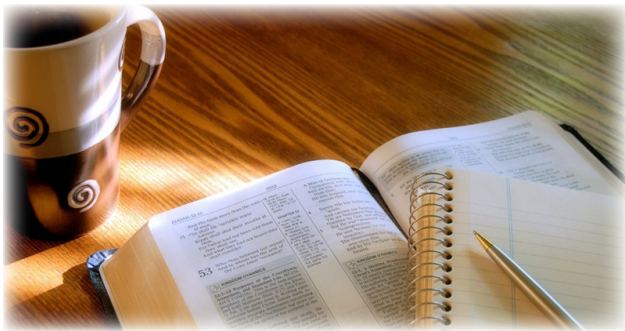


The LCF Connection

January 2020



A Bible-Reading Challenge

by Steve Swartz

I read the Bible in the wee hours each morning on my treadmill. Because of my sixty-five-year-old eyes, I use a large-print Bible. As I read, I scan for teaching, rebuking, correction, and training in righteousness. I want God's Word to thoroughly equip me for every good work that he will bring for me that day.

I'm glad we have a tradition at LCF for reading through the Bible in one year. The Bible, after all, originates from God. It's a useful book and unique because it is more like a library than one book. It is a collection of writings.

In a nod to the different types of literature in the Bible, try reading one chapter of each section each day for the next year. This would be five chapters a day.

- Section 1: *History*—Start reading in Genesis and read through Job, one chapter per day.
- Section 2: *Wisdom*—Start in Psalms and read through the Song of Songs. Then repeat.
- Section 3: *Prophets*—Start in Isaiah and finish in Malachi, the last book of the Old Testament.
- Section 4: *Gospels/Early Church*—Start in Matthew and conclude in Acts. Then repeat.
- Section 5: *Letters*—Start in Romans and conclude with Revelation.

This is a challenge. The Bible is big. You need a stack of 10 average-sized books to equal the volume of words contained in one Bible. All that thin Bible paper is concealing a mountain of material. But when you falter, remember these words from the Bible about the Bible:

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness..." 2 Timothy 3:16

You might not read on the treadmill in the wee hours of the morning, but consider joining me in reading some place and sometime during each day in 2020. ■

Note: There are additional Bible reading suggestions available on LCF's website (under the Bible Teachings tab) as well as an assortment of One-Year Bibles in LCF's library for you to check-out.

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Children's Ministries Update

by Becky Hostetler

Attention all children in preschool through 8th grade and their parents! LCF is excited to announce the return of our Sunday School program for the winter, spring and fall quarters of 2020. Alice Jenkins, Shannon Scheffel, and Becky Hostetler have come together as an interim Children's Ministry Team to provide leadership to this endeavor. As you remember the church in your prayers, please pray for our teachers and children. Pray that LCF would be a place where children learn the Word of God and grow in a personal relationship with Jesus.

A big thank you to Nathan and Alice Jenkins and Zoie Brashear for teaching children's church these past few months and for helping them prepare for the songs they sang at LCF's Family Christmas. Your work with the children is much appreciated!



If anyone has questions or suggestions concerning children's ministries at LCF please feel free to contact Alice, Shannon, or Becky. We look forward to seeing what all God has in store! ■



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London Christian Fellowship seeks to develop authentic and passionate followers of Jesus Christ.



LCF's Roots

A Message from the Pastor
by Reuben Sairs

A couple years ago I got my genealogy test. These things aren't perfect by any means, but it turns out that apart from thinner lines going back through Alsace and Holland, I am a son of the British Isles, and from within that island world I am quite Celtic, and from within that Celtic world mostly Scottish.

What if we did a church genealogical test on LCF—what would we be? We consider ourselves a community-type church, meaning our character and practices will be heavily shaped by the people who show up regularly and participate, but all churches have deeper roots.

Broadly speaking we're 100% Protestant evangelicals, but drawing from lots of sources and expressions of that. We have people from Baptist, Charismatic, Mennonite, Episcopal, Lutheran, non-denominational and unbelieving backgrounds. Digging deeper we're in the CMC (formerly the Conservative Mennonite Conference, in the midst of a name change.) The CMC is not very old—a little over 100 years, but its foundations are among late 19th century moderately change-minded Amish. The Amish in turn were a movement that broke away from the Mennonites in the late 17th century, around 150 years into Mennonite history. You don't see horses and buggies at LCF, but some of our people have lived very close to that world. The Mennonites in turn were a mid-sixteenth century expression of Anabaptism—a small but diverse reform movement that sought to restore primitive New Testament Christianity. Oh, by the way, like all interesting genealogies, there are many skeletons in the various closets around this house. That would take a different column—maybe someday. Anabaptism was a reaction within the broader movement called the Reformation. Sometimes the Anabaptists have been described as radicals. Depending on the region some of Anabaptists responded directly to Roman Catholicism, and some in other areas to Protestants who in turn were already reacting to the Catholics. Roman Catholicism was the evolving picture of the church in Europe in the Middle Ages. In the west it was about the only game in town—everyone else was illegal. Roman Catholicism was the dominant part of Christendom or Christianity (words not found in the Bible) which was a synthesis of church/state/society into a single fabric—church, state and culture welded together and fed steroids for several centuries. Anabaptists didn't like that idea at all, and felt it was akin to apostasy.

Where does this leave us? A genealogical study of LCF is interesting, but I would like us to keep our roots in perspective. First of all, we must always remember that we are 100% forgiven sinners. There is no place for family snobbery. Second, we must never get very far from our true beginnings. One of Menno Simons' (from whom the name Mennonite comes) key verses was 1 Corinthians 3:11. *"For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."* When we look deep enough into our church genealogical test, our spiritual family tree, we are also 100% the descendents of Peter's confession in Matthew 16:16 on which Jesus said he would build his church, and of the Holy Spirit's arrival at Pentecost. Those are our Mayflower-type ancestors! We can't really go any deeper. ■

Elders' Notes

by Jesse Diller

We began our meeting on December 10th with a time of discussion of the faith crisis that many young adults experience these days, and spent time praying for those we know who are either drifting away from God or are searching for spiritual answers.

We spent a good portion of our meeting talking about the changes happening in our Children's Ministries. Rob had a meeting with interested parents and volunteers on November 24th to solicit input. We approved Becky Hostetler, Alice Jenkins, and Shannon Scheffel working together as a team to give interim leadership to children's ministries at LCF, with Becky giving leadership to the team. We are grateful for all three of them and their willingness to serve in this way. We will stay in touch with them and reevaluate to see where things are at by the spring quarter.

We also discussed proposed Teacher Approval Policy and Application documents. After reviews, tweaks, and approvals, we hope to have them ready for future teachers by February. In light of the discussion about the teacher approval documents, the question was brought up whether we need to have some type of application/approval process for all leaders who serve, not just those who teach. More discussion will surely follow!

We talked about the challenges of changes and transitions in a fluid society. People come...and people go—for various reasons. We recognize that it is a normal part of life and ministry. We are thankful for the new people God continues to bring to our church body, and we miss those who are no longer with us. We strive to keep our focus on Christ and do our best to make disciples and to preach and teach the truths of God's Word—trusting that it is God who is doing the work and building his church among us.

We are thankful for the approval of Jim Jones' 2nd 3-year term on the council and Jesse Diller's 2nd 3-year term as elder, and for their willingness to continue serving in this way. Based on the congregation's nominations and his willingness to serve, we recommend that Keith Scheffel serve a 3-year term as our 3rd elder. We will have an affirmation vote for him on January 5th (due to people being gone over the holidays).

We also talked about moderators. Due to scheduling and availability, the list of available moderators is changing a bit. We noted several individuals who we would like to ask to consider leading in this way. Our next meeting will be January 14th. ■

We hope that all of you will join us on January 19 for our annual

Celebrate the Church Sunday!

It will include our annual membership commitment (including bringing in new members), reflecting on God's faithfulness this past year, anticipating what he has in store for 2020, and of course, a delicious potluck meal as we spend time together!

Council Update

by Jim Jones

The Children's Ministry Team Lead position is going to be led in the interim by a team of three—Becky Hostetler, Alice Jenkins, and Shannon Scheffel.

The budget was discussed at length, our year-to-date deficit is currently in the positive (+\$242). With our mortgage interest reduced by 50%, Tasha is going to check with Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) to see what options are possible to reduce our monthly payment.

The LCF Child Protection Policy was discussed for revisions. ■

Ministering to Those in Prison

by Theresa Hennis



When you think of ministry work, what comes to mind? Working overseas to help others come to know Christ? Bringing the good news to inner-city children who need to know Christ cares about them? It's easy to see those needs and feel the tug of compassion on our hearts. Another ministry that is closer to home but not as often understood is that of prison ministry. Those who are incarcerated need to know that being locked behind bars is not the end of their story.

LCF member Marcus Freed serves at London Correctional Institution for inmates in the Horizon Program Initiative Program. He is a trained GriefShare facilitator and has been a part of facilitating both inside and outside prison groups. Grief Share is a 13-week program that helps persons deal with their grief issues.

Marcus will travel to Alabama in late January to serve in the We Care Ministry. We Care Ministry supports state prisons by bringing assistant chaplains to the men's and women's prisons of Alabama.

Marcus shared what he will be doing the next several months and how we can be praying for him:

- *"I will be staying and living in the town of Clayton, Alabama and serving in Ventress Prison from February through April. I have already met the chaplain and will be offering to bring two possible programs to that prison, the first of which is a GriefShare support group.*
- *The second program is a one-on-one discipleship I have been a part of, and I will be offering to train residents to do one-on-one discipleship within the prison.*
- *I'll be living in a house provided by a local Baptist church in Clayton.*
- *Please pray for the upcoming weeks of preparation as I plan and make the three-month move.*
- *I will be taking a week off from Alabama and doing a Joni (Joni Eareckson Tada Wheels for the World) trip to El Salvador March 7-14."* ■

Note: Please keep Marcus in your prayers these next several months and feel free to text or email him a note of encouragement.

A Very Special Dollhouse

by Theresa Hennis

We want to give special thanks to inmates who participate in the Horizon Prison Initiative Program, on the Horizon Program floor at London Correctional Institution where Marcus serves as a Grief Share facilitator. They are the men we wrote about recently who sent us letters thanking us for the Grief Share workbooks LCF provided to them. They created a wonderful dollhouse that now sits in our preschool nursery. Our children enjoy playing with it.



It is made entirely of paper in various forms, with glue, rice, salt, and sand. They build their projects with paper material left over from cartons, etc. They have created other community outreach projects, as well. Last year they built a Norman Rockwell-like display with an ice rink, ice skaters and snow scene set in a neighborhood. That one is at the Bluebird Retirement Center as a table display. They are planning to make a boys' castle next.

The centerpieces on the tables for our LCF Family Christmas brunch were also made by the inmates. ■



LCF Family Christmas

Sunday, December 22nd

A special celebration of Jesus' birth through songs (including several by the children), scripture, and testimonies. It was inspiring to hear about the difference Christ makes as we face the pain and brokenness that come from things we deal with such as sin, sickness, depression, loss, etc. Thanks to the Fellowship Team for providing the delicious brunch!

London's Barbershop Quartet sang at LCF on February 24th



Helping to Host CMC's Annual Conference at Jonathan Alder, July 26th-28th



The Easter Song by LCF's children on March 21st



Celebrating 8 baptisms on September 8th



June 30th Parent/Child Dedication



A Brief Pictorial Review of 2019 to refresh our memories of God's gifts and faithfulness this past year... Can you recall each event?

Ladies group to Beth Moore Live in Cincinnati August 23rd-24th



"In the Wild" VBS June 10th-14th



Sunday Service at Big Darby Park on September 22nd



Youth Group Mission Trip to Arizona June 22-30



Closing on our old church building, October 10th



One of several LCF 101 classes (October 26th)



Godspell Performance on July 11th

Worship led by RBC Choir on December 8th



The LCF Connection

A monthly newsletter designed to enhance communication at London Christian Fellowship

What did you think? If any of the stories in this Connection sparked an idea or opinion you'd like to share, email us at secretary@lcfweb.org. Editors: Theresa Hennis, Elisabeth Yoder, and Doris Swartz. If you prefer that we do not use photos of you in the Connection, you may opt out by emailing us.

We look forward to seeing what God has in store for 2020!